



May 19, 2017

Ms. Cynthia Brown
Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

Docket No.: FD 35952

Dear Ms. Brown:

I write to express my continued opposition to the Great Lakes Basin Rail Line (GLBRL) and my concerns with both Great Lakes Basin Transportation, Inc.'s (GLBT) application and their request for a protective order.

Based on GLBT's recent application, I have serious concerns over intent, potential investors and stockholders, and transparency. The proposed route is a massive project that deserves a complete application, diligent oversight, and full transparency for the sake of all the people and lives affected. We have not seen this needed transparency or diligence from GLBT.

GLBT initially justified their need for an application deadline extension in order to, they claimed, collect letters of intent from freight rail carriers confirming use of this purposed rail line. GLBT did not include any such letters in their recent application, citing concerns over competition. Instead, GLBT submitted an incomplete application and relies on mere claims of "holding discussions with potential customers" as adequate proof the rail line will be utilized. This lack of complete and sufficient documentation raises serious concerns over GLBT's intent and diligence. This application should be rejected as incomplete.

GLBT has also submitted a motion for a protective order to keep the identities of stockholders secret. GLBT argues a need for privacy, but I disagree and I ask that you deny the motion for protective order. This project is to be funded entirely through private sources, yet GLBT admits they have "not yet obtained financing commitments for this entire amount and does not anticipate doing so until it receives STB authority to construct the proposed line." Approving a project of this scale, that affects as many lives as this project does without finalized funding is reckless. Additionally, GLBT claims that none of its stockholders are "affiliated in any way with any industry that may be served by the proposed rail line." Without knowing the identities of these stockholders, it is impossible to know if this claim is true.

Despite receiving an extension of the application deadline, GLBT has been unable to produce the documentation and financing information necessary to prove this project is sustainable or even

45TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

State Capitol: PO Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708 (608) 266-1192
Toll-free: (888) 534-0045 FAX: (608) 282-3645 E-mail: Rep.Spreitzer@legis.wisconsin.gov
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realistic. GLBT has also failed to correct several problems I have pointed out in previous letters, including the infeasibility of its route, which cuts directly through the site of a nearly \$1 billion power plant project currently under construction by Alliant Energy.

Finally, please consider the dramatic change in the project cost stated in the application as further evidence of the lack of transparency and infeasibility of the project. The original proposal estimated a cost of \$8 billion to build a freight rail line. However, the latest application proposes a \$2.8 billion rail line. Mr. Frank Patton has simultaneously claimed in the media that the project also includes a privately funded tollway. I would also note that Mr. Patton apparently kept this information from the public intentionally, stating "[w]e didn't want to go public with the highway but that was our original intent." (*See attached article*). This should be more than enough evidence to lead the Surface Transportation Board to be skeptical of the project and reject the application as well as the protective order requesting further secrecy.

An application for a project of this size and scale must be complete, open, and transparent. The residents of southern Wisconsin expect nothing less, and neither should the Surface Transportation Board.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to finding a solution that best serves the interests of my constituents and the residents of southern Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Spreitzer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

State Rep. Mark Spreitzer
45th Wisconsin Assembly District

Encl.